

## Resources

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*Hawaiian Sovereignty*

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THE SOVEREIGNTY MOVEMENT  
IN HAWAII

The one-hundredth anniversary observances of the overthrow of the Hawaiian Kingdom brought wide attention to the Hawaiian sovereignty movement.<sup>1</sup> On Sunday morning, 17 January 1993, in Honolulu, about seven thousand Hawaiians marched to 'Iolani Palace, seat of the former monarchy. Another five thousand persons came to see the black-draped palace and to hear impassioned speeches on the illegal overthrow of the Hawaiian monarchy and demands for the restoration of sovereignty to the Hawaiian people.

In 1893 the independent Hawaiian Kingdom had come to an end with the deposing of Queen Lili'uokalani. A provisional government was declared by a small group of Caucasian businessmen, who then established a Republic of Hawai'i. Hawai'i was annexed by the United States in 1898 and became an American territory two years later. Statehood status was granted in 1959.

Today, there are over two hundred thousand Hawaiians, who are almost entirely part-Hawaiian, in an island population of over one million living on seven islands. The other major ethnic groups are Caucasians, Japanese, Chinese, Koreans, and Filipinos. There are also other Asians, Pacific Islanders, and African Americans. About half of the population intermarries with members of other ethnic groups.

Although there are successful

Hawaiians who have achieved economic, social, and professional status, many Hawaiians are at the bottom of the scale in income and education when compared with other ethnic groups in Hawai'i. Hawaiians have higher incidences of diseases and higher rates of crime and imprisonment. They are among the homeless living on beaches where once a traditional land tenure system provided sustenance for all Hawaiians. More federal and other programs are addressing these concerns in order to improve the life-style of Hawaiians. At the same time, initiatives for sovereignty or, in the broader sense, self-determination have emerged among Hawaiians.

Since the 1960s there has been a significant revival in Hawaiian culture—beginning with music and hula—known as the Hawaiian Renaissance. More academic courses are being offered on the Hawaiian language and culture than in the past. The last decade has seen the establishment of the Pūnana Leo program of private preschools where only Hawaiian is spoken. Also, a few public elementary schools have classes taught only in Hawaiian.

Although there are many Hawaiian groups working for various causes, the movement for cultural revitalization has now taken on a new dimension of political activism. A growing number of Hawaiians have moved into the political arena, and they seek nothing less than sovereignty for the Hawaiian people. Major issues are the return of large tracts of land lost as a result of

the overthrow as well as native rights involving water, gathering, burial, religious practices, and other traditional rights.

#### HAWAIIAN SOVEREIGNTY STUDY GROUP

A number of printed sources on Hawaiian sovereignty are available as a basis for understanding the political initiative toward self-determination by and for Hawaiians. Discussions have just begun on the varying positions in defining sovereignty and what sovereignty entails. There are at least ten positions, some advocated by only a handful of persons. Moreover, antisovereignty sentiments by Hawaiians as well as non-Hawaiians appear with some regularity in Honolulu newspaper articles and letters to the editor.

Hui Na'auao (Education Organization), established with federal funds in 1991 and consisting of representatives from over forty Hawaiian organizations and groups, was organized to serve as an educational forum on sovereignty. Hui Na'auao has issued study materials in conjunction with workshops for the general public: *Hui Na'auao: Sovereignty and Self-determination, a Community Education Project* (1992a) and a supplementary chronology of events (1992b). In addition, there are transcripts of interviews representing eleven positions on sovereignty, which are described in the section below on audiovisual sources.

This group has focused on the historical events leading to the overthrow and the examination of various models of sovereignty. They offer programs featuring speakers, and they prepare

videotapes that are shown on the local television stations. Hui Na'auao also explores issues such as land claims, water rights, and Hawaiian perspectives on caring for the land.

#### HAWAIIAN SOVEREIGNTY GROUPS AND THEIR PUBLICATIONS

The largest of the sovereignty "groups" is Ka Lāhui Hawai'i (The Hawaiian Nation) with approximately eighteen thousand members. Non-Hawaiians may become members but cannot vote or hold office. There are currently two thousand such members. Begun as a Hawaiian initiative, Ka Lāhui considers itself a nation with a constitution. It advocates the "nation within a nation" concept, similar to the status of American Indians, although the US government does not yet recognize Hawaiians as an indigenous people. Ka Lāhui Hawai'i stands firm on the return of 1.6 million acres of ceded lands once belonging to the Hawaiian monarchy and kingdom. These lands would serve as a land base for the Hawaiian nation.

The first constitutional convention was held in 1987. Attorney Mililani Trask was elected its first governor two years later, and she continues to hold this position of leadership. Other spokespersons include her sister, Haunani-Kay Trask, and Lilikalā Kame'e-leihiwa, both professors at the Center for Hawaiian Studies at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. They and others have spoken at the national and international levels about Hawaiian sovereignty.

Ka Lāhui Hawai'i, with support from federal funds, sponsors its own series of educational forums. Its posi-

tion is stated in *Hawaiian Sovereignty: Myth and Reality*, issued in conjunction with a 1992 forum. This publication includes the historical grounds for sovereignty and presents the Ka Lāhui Hawai'i point of view on sovereignty. Ka Lāhui Hawai'i has also issued *Ka Lāhui Hawai'i: A Compilation of Legal Materials for Workshops on the Hawaiian Nation* (1991).

Another position on sovereignty is held by attorney Hayden Burgess, who also uses the name Pōkā Laenui. He is a firm advocate for the restoration of Hawai'i as an independent nation. For a number of years, he has spoken to groups and appeared at national and international meetings. More recently, he began conducting a half-hour program, *A Second Glance*, on the local public radio station, KHPR. His model for sovereignty would include non-Hawaiians as well as Hawaiians, since the Hawaiian Kingdom allowed non-Hawaiians to become naturalized citizens. His *Collection of Papers on Hawaiian Sovereignty and Self-Determination* (1992) is issued under the auspices of the Institute for the Advancement of Hawaiian Affairs, a group consisting of Burgess and a handful of followers.

Another sovereignty group is Ka Pākaukau (The Table; or, figuratively, a roundtable for ideas), a coalition of about fourteen Hawaiian groups. It has issued a one-page statement advocating an independent Hawaiian nation for Hawaiians. Richard Kekuni Blaisdell, MD, is a frequent spokesperson for this group. He prefers to use the Hawaiian words *kanaka maoli* 'true/real person' instead of the English terms "Hawaiian" and "part-

Hawaiian." Dr Blaisdell is also a leading convener for the Pro-Hawaiian Sovereignty Working Group, which sponsors forums.

Other positions include those of Dennis "Bumpy" Kanahale, representing the 'Ōhana (extended family) councils that also seek complete independence. These and other models of sovereignty are articulated in the transcripts of the eleven positions, described in the audiovisual section.

Although a return to a monarchy is not necessarily part of the sovereignty models, Windyceslau Lorenzo, in a full-page newspaper announcement (*Honolulu Advertiser*, 5 June 1992, B3), proclaimed the restoration of the Kingdom of Hawai'i with himself as Kamehameha VI, successor to the throne.

Other long-standing Hawaiian organizations such as the Hawaiian Civic Clubs continue to be generally apolitical but promote educational programs on Hawaiian issues.

#### GOVERNMENT-BASED GROUPS

The Hawai'i state Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) takes yet another direction on sovereignty. OHA was created by the 1978 state constitutional convention. Voters for its board of trustees must be Hawaiian.

OHA successfully lobbied for a bill in the 1993 legislature to establish a Hawaiian Sovereignty Advisory Commission, which has been placed under the Hawai'i Office of State Planning. The bill also provides for Hawaiian voters to vote in the November 1994 general election on whether to convene a convention on sovereignty.

Ka Lāhui Hawai'i and others have

criticized these state-directed developments and the short timetable. Ka Lāhui Hawai'i is sharply critical of OHA and of Governor John Waihe'e, who is a Hawaiian and a supporter of OHA. Waihe'e, a delegate to the 1978 constitutional convention, favored the creation of OHA. OHA's views are summarized in *Ho'olāhui—to Rebuild a Nation. A Special Supplement* (1993), which appeared in the 17 January 1993 *Sunday Star-Bulletin and Advertiser* and in *Blueprint for Native Hawaiian Entitlements* (1989). The monthly newspaper *Ka Wai Ola o OHA* provides wide coverage of Hawaiian activities on all islands.

A group with a government land base is the State Council of Hawaiian Homestead Associations, formed in 1987 by the Hawaiian Homestead groups on the different islands. In 1921 the US Congress established homesteads to provide parcels of land for Hawaiians to live on and to farm; however, some lands were diverted to other uses. A blood quantum of 50 percent is required to be eligible for a ninety-nine-year lease.

For various reasons, there is a long waiting list for these lands administered by the state's Department of Hawaiian Home Lands. With active encouragement to apply, the number of applicants in the last ten years has grown to over 20,000 in spite of the existing long waiting list. Although the Association's goals are more narrow, that of complete self-governance of the homesteads, these lands could serve as a land base for a Hawaiian nation.

Kamaki Kanahale, president of the association and also an OHA trustee, voices the views of these groups in the

transcripts described in the section on audiovisual sources.

### PUBLISHED BOOKS

The first full-scale treatment to appear on the current sovereignty movement was *A Call for Hawaiian Sovereignty* (1990), by Michael Kioni Dudley, a Caucasian, and attorney Keoni Kealoha Agard. The book, which can be read by high school students as well as older readers, presents an overview on the subject. Historical events on the overthrow of the kingdom in 1893, and the need and rationale for sovereignty are discussed.

*The Native Hawaiian Rights Handbook* (1991), edited by attorney Melody McKenzie, is an important compilation of articles on Hawaiian lands and sovereignty, and other issues of water, burial and exhumation, access, gathering rights, customary adoption, and the practice of native religion. The handbook also includes information on charitable trusts and federal programs and benefits for Hawaiians.

An earlier federal publication, *Report on the Culture, Needs and Concerns of Native Hawaiians Pursuant to Public Law 96-565, Title III* (1983), in two volumes, by the US Native Hawaiians Study Commission, documents the current situation of Hawaiians and provides a historical background. Land, language, and health are among the subjects covered in concise articles.

More recently, Haunani-Kay Trask's *From a Native Daughter: Colonization and Sovereignty in Hawai'i* (1993) offers a collection of essays cogently written in support of decolonization and sovereignty for Hawaiians

as an indigenous people. Trask is an outspoken figure on sovereignty and a key spokesperson for Ka Lāhui Hawai'i.

For a literary perspective, *He Alo ā he Alo—Face to Face: Hawaiian Voices on Sovereignty* is a collection of articles and poems by Hawaiian writers, including S. Haunani Apoliona, Mahealani Kamau'u, Mililani Trask, Puhipau, and Pōkā Laenui and his wife, Puanani Burgess, with illustrations by Hawaiian artists.

### HISTORICAL STUDIES

The one-hundredth anniversary observance prompted the publication of two books. Michael Dougherty's *To Steal a Kingdom* (1993) is a historical treatment critical of Americans whose actions led to the end of the Hawaiian Kingdom. Rich Budnick's *Stolen Kingdom: An American Conspiracy* (1993), with historical photographs, is mainly a useful compilation of excerpts from various sources on the illegality of the overthrow. Both books are written by Caucasians sympathetic to Hawaiian causes.

Two special newspaper supplements brought the overthrow to the attention of the general public. In November 1992 the *Honolulu Advertiser* issued *Overthrow: A Day-by-day Account of the Overthrow of Hawai'i's Monarch 100 Years Ago*, and in early January 1993, in time for the observance, the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* published *Overthrow Centennial, January 17, 1893–January 17, 1993*.

*Affairs in Hawaii* (1895), popularly known as the "Blount Report," was reproduced (all thirty-five copies have

been sold) by the University of Hawai'i Library's Preservation Department, by special demand. This voluminous compilation of federal reports, letters, and testimonies serves as a key primary source on the role of Americans involved in the overthrow. These and other federal reports were a result of an investigation by James Blount, who was sent to Hawai'i by President Grover Cleveland.

An earlier detailed scholarly historical study, *The Hawaiian Revolution, 1893–1894* (1959), by William Adams Russ, was also reprinted in time for the observance, as was his *The Hawaiian Republic (1894–98) and Its Struggle to Win Annexation* (1961).

Other reprints include Queen Lili'uokalani's *Hawai'i's Story by Hawai'i's Queen*. First published in 1898 after she was deposed, Lili'uokalani writes her own account of the crucial years of the 1890s. Also reprinted was Helena G. Allen's *The Betrayal of Lili'uokalani: Last Queen of Hawai'i, 1838–1917* (1982), a biography based in part on the personal reminiscence of Lydia Aholo, foster daughter of Lili'uokalani.

### BIBLIOGRAPHIES AND OTHER SOURCES

For further sources there are several bibliographies to consult. An extensive list of a broad historical scope is *Impact of Change: Overthrow and Annexation: A Bibliography* (1992), compiled by the Hawaiian Section of the Hawai'i State Library. A useful chronology of events is included.

My own short core list of print and audiovisual sources was compiled for

the January 1993 observance: *Hawaiian Sovereignty and Self-determination: A Bibliography*.<sup>2</sup>

Dennis Ladd and Carol Yamaguchi have compiled *Native Hawaiian Rights: An Annotated Bibliography of Materials* (in the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa's Law Library).

Crucial to an understanding of the sovereignty movement is the reading of the two Honolulu newspapers, the *Honolulu Advertiser* and the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin*, in order to keep abreast of the most recent developments.

### AUDIOVISUAL SOURCES

An annotated bibliography *Native Hawaiian Issues: A Bibliography of Videos and Film in the Wong Audiovisual Center, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa Library* (1993), by Dore Minatodani, provides resources on many Hawaiian issues, including sovereignty on page 35. Audiovisual materials are important sources, since much current information on the various positions on sovereignty is available only in this medium. Many of these programs have been broadcast on Honolulu television stations.

Nā Maka o ka 'Āina is the major producer of videotapes on Hawaiians, including the sovereignty movement and related issues. *Act of War: The Overthrow of the Hawaiian Nation* (1993) is a compelling documentary on the events leading to the illegal overthrow of Queen Lili'uokalani in 1893. The earlier production *Faces of the Nation* (1989) is an excellent presentation on sovereignty and ceded and other land claims.

Nā Maka o ka 'Āina has also pro-

duced in conjunction with Hui Na'auao Hui Na'auao: *Sovereignty: Eleven Concepts of Self-determination* (1993). Eleven fifteen-minute interviews with representatives of varying positions on sovereignty include Hayden Burgess, Mililani Trask, Richard Kekuni Blaisdell, Kamaki Kanahele, Frank Nobriga of The Temple of Lono (one of the four major Hawaiian gods), Clayton Hee of OHA, Rowena Akana also of OHA, Michael Dudley (a Caucasian) of Nā Kāne o ka Malo (The Men of the Malo), Kamaki Kanahele, Kawehi Kanui Gill of the 'Ohana Council, Peggy Ha'o Ross of 'Ohana o Hawai'i, and Kihei Soli Nihei. Transcripts accompany these videotapes.

Nā Maka o ka 'Āina has also filmed two conferences. *Hawaiian Sovereignty and Self Determination* is the proceedings of the 1988 Native Hawaiian Sovereignty Conference held in Honolulu, and a *Seminar on Hawaiian Sovereignty* is the videotape of a conference held the same year at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, featuring Haunani-Kay Trask and Mililani Trask.

*Betrayal* (1993) is a Kukui Foundation project shown on the Honolulu public television station in January 1993 during the one-hundredth anniversary observances. Marlene Sai portrays Queen Lili'uokalani in a dramatization of the overthrow. The program ends with an interview with Sai.

Two sound recordings on sovereignty are *Hawaiian Nation: A Call for Hawaiian Sovereignty* (1990), featuring various singers, including Jeff Rasmusen and Marlene Sai, and *Kapono* (1993), with Henry Kapono and others

in a musical tribute to Hawaiian sovereignty.

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### Note

1 Hawaiian in the context of this paper refers to those people with Hawaiian blood in contrast to residents without Hawaiian blood.

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*Addresses for Print and Audiovisual Sources*

*Bookstores and Vendors*

Honolulu Bookshops  
Ala Moana Center  
1585 Kapi'olani Blvd.  
Honolulu, HI 96814

Native Books  
PO Box 37095  
Honolulu, HI 96837

*Publishers*

University of Hawai'i Press  
2840 Kolowalo St.  
Honolulu, HI 96822

*Organizations and Agencies*

Center for Hawaiian Studies  
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa  
Moore Hall 428  
Honolulu, HI 96822

Hui Na'auao  
3415 Kā'ohinani St.  
Honolulu, HI 96817

Office of Hawaiian Affairs  
711 Kapi'olani Blvd., Suite 500  
Honolulu, HI 96813

*Audiovisual Sources*

Kukui Foundation  
PO Box 17884  
Honolulu, HI 96817

House of Music  
1585 Kapi'olani Blvd.  
Honolulu, HI 96814

Nā Maka o ka 'Āina  
3020 Kahaloa Dr.  
Honolulu, HI 96822

Oceanic Cable Television  
'Ōlelo: The Corporation for  
Community Television  
960 Māpunapuna St.  
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